APPENDIX A
VISUAL ASSESSMENT REPORT

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Introduction

This statement responds to the requirements of DCP 16 - Subdivision Manual for the provision of a Visual Assessment study. This report deals with these issues and proposes an approach to each area of interest in the realisation of the Nightcap Village Community.

1.1 SUMMARY

/ The Nightcap Village Community will not visually impact the ridges and hilltops in the area of the site.

/ Replanting of the steep slope below Mebbin National Park Road.

/ Some upper slope areas on site will be visible within the site from lower positions.

/ Limited parts of some sites will be on land that has a greater than 30% slope.

/ The majority of the site will be visually screened to the road by riperian vegetation along the Tweed River.

It is proposed that the re-establishment of riverine trees to selected locations, the establishment of site specific building envelope areas, the determination of environmental covenant areas and the limitation of planting on sites to a list of accepted species will enhance and mitigate on site impacts created by the project in the short term, and enhance the site in the long term through visual continuity.

This maintenance of visual continuity will be delivered through:

/ Planting street trees and general landscape treatment of the road reserves.

/ Replanting currently bare hilltop areas.

/ An integrated design approach, to a high level of execution, embracing engineering, environmental, architectural planning and landscape design guidelines.

/ Minimised earthworks for road construction.

/ Retention of known watercourses and significant individual trees.

/ The establishment of stepped building forms on sloping land.

Overview

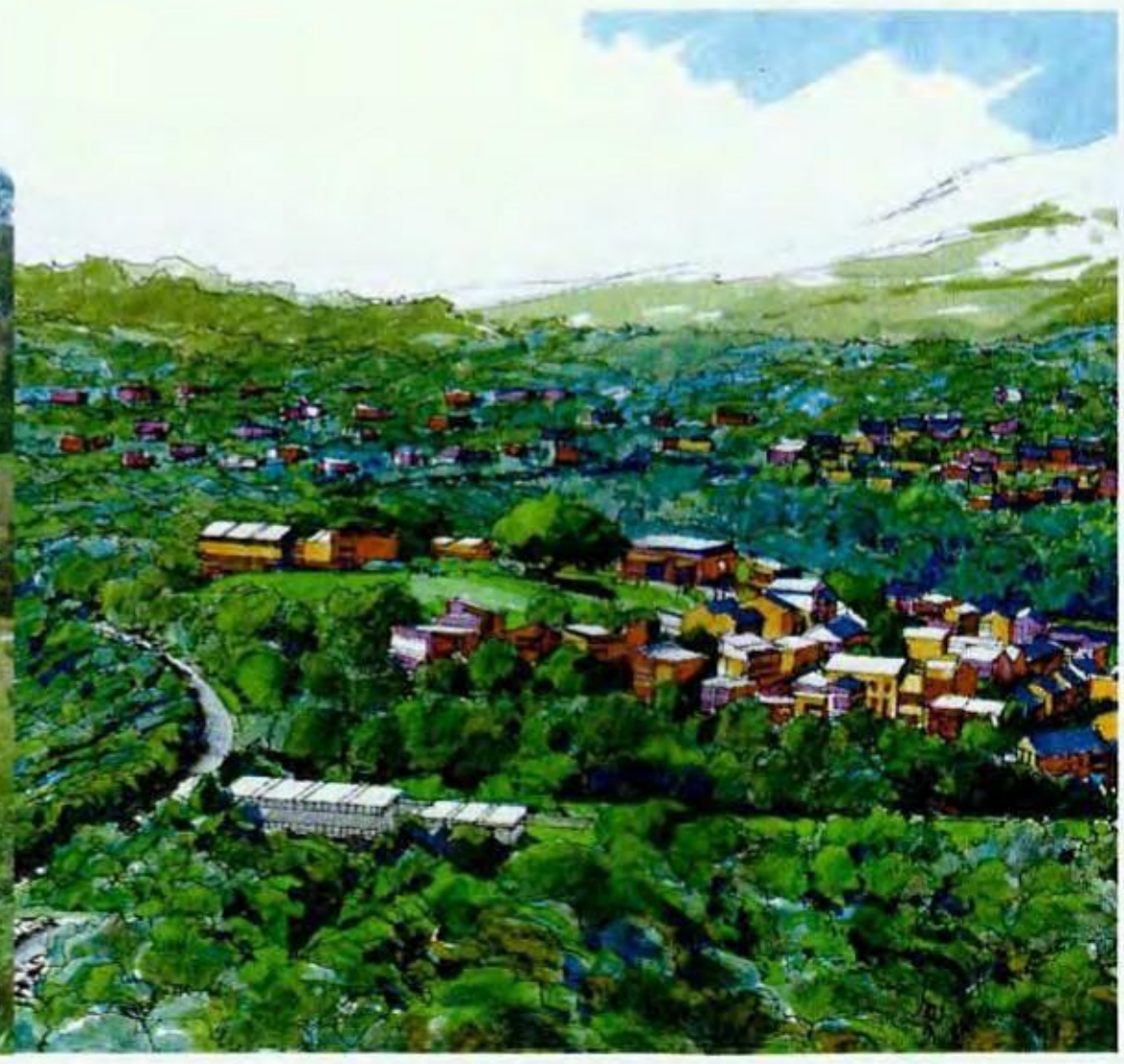
02

The Nightcap Village project is planned to be an integrated and fully designed residential community in the Tweed Shire.

A fundamental aim of the Nightcap Village project has been to achieve the incorporation of significant view corridors from within the site to Mt Warning and the Nightcap range.

This residential community design responds carefully to the site topography and the local environment. The project masterplan is based on a design that meets the needs of the natural and man made environment through integration of the natural attributes and topography of the site with the requirements for access and construction.

The Site Master Plan has provided for the establishment of extensive open space areas which respect view corridors, and stands of native vegetation in the establishment of new village areas on site.



Broad Context

03

The site is located along the Murwillumbah - Kyogle Road in the upper Tweed River valley with prominent local mountain formations and the Tweed River surrounding the site. Although the site contains areas of intermediate height, these have no vegetation cover. The view aspects into the site are severely limited in the immediate near context. In the broader context the elevated areas of the site form part of an even more elevated landscape seen from more distant vantage points.

To the south, the site may be seen briefly from the road and some surrounding properties. From the north, most of the site is not visible.

General Overview of Impacts

04

A combination of development on selected parts of the internal higher land areas and slopes, balanced with increased riverine forest area will allow the usual impact of the site to be significantly unaltered.

The development proposal will have some initial visual impact on areas that have previously been cleared through the establishment of the road system.

The staging of the development combined with the progressive development of an integrated landscape theme will absorb the visual increase of site density into a coherent landscape. The scale of the surrounding mountain areas combined with the screening of the riverine vegetation and the natural built form of the site allows the delivery of a cohesive visual impact both from outside and within the site.

A detailed visual analysis will be prepared when Precinct Plans are undertaken.

Mitigation

05

It is proposed that the re-establishment of intermediate high ground trees and the establishment of site specific building envelope areas against areas of protected landscape will ensure the integration of the visual impact of the overall site development. Specifically, this will occur through the following strategies.

5.1 PLANTING OF ROAD RESERVES

The overall impact of streets and road networks on the site will create the opportunity for significant investment in the public realm through the landscape strategy in the streets. It is proposed that street landscaping will incorporate establishment of short term planting with quick growing indigenous species, combined with native grasses and turf areas to provide rapid stabilisation from erosion risk and provide a 'green' cover to earthworks. This will be developed in conjunction with longer term planting of permanent street trees and feature planting in key areas across the site.

5.2 MINIMISATION OF SITES WITH SLOPES GREATER THAN 30%

The sites for development are substantially contained on land with slopes of less than 30%. However in a number of locations greater slopes exist and will be substantially dealt with by the limitation of building envelopes away from these steeper site areas.

5.3 INTEGRATED DESIGN APPROACH

The Nightcap Village community is proposed to have a high level of integrated design. This includes the integration of engineering, environmental, architectural community and landscape design principles in the development of the Site Master Plan as currently proposed.

5.4 MINIMISE EARTHWORKS FOR ROAD CONSTRUCTION

A careful analysis of the civil engineering requirements for road access has been undertaken. This has resulted in the location of roads being carefully established to provide for minimal earthworks in most locations.

5.5 RETENTION OF WATERCOURSES

This approach has formed the basis of the overall design layout for the community with all watercourses being preserved to cater for stormwater and overland flow and to enable preservation of existing site vegetation and additional planting.

5.6 STEPPED BUILDING FORMS ON SLOPING LAND

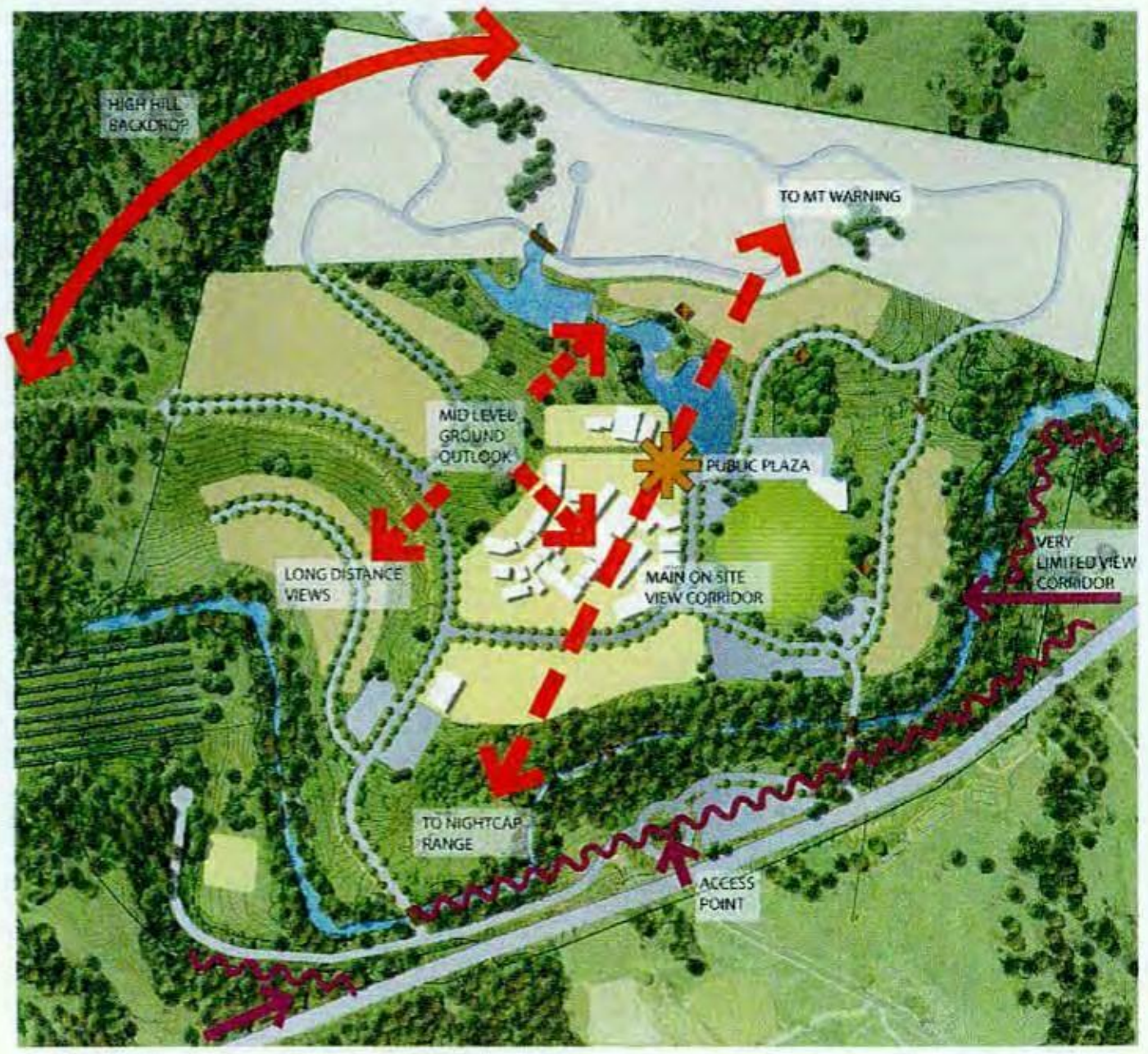
The approach for the design throughout the community has been established to limit, cut and retaining forms on individual sites and encourage the development of stepped building forms, particularly in the mixed village precinct.

5.7 GENERAL SITE LAYOUT

The layout of streets is designed to restrict the amount of cut and fill and retaining structures will be reviewed similarly to minimize visual impact. The overall development of building covenants for the site will ensure the final built form pays careful attention to the nature of materials, colours, form and the relationship of car accommodation to houses as a visual impact on the site.

5.8 VIEW CORRIDORS

Significant view corrdors from parts of the site up to the elevated areas exist. The Concept Plan has been carefully structured to maximise onsite outlook to these areas of high amenity and consequently minimise the visual interference within these areas.



Overall Conclusion

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The Nightcap Village community has developed a balanced environmental approach to site planning. The overall context of preservation of view corridors has been provided in the Concept Plan.

Some short to medium term visual integration will be desirable on the higher parts of the site for lands facing south east., and to a lesser extent some of the slopes of the site looking to the south and west. These impacts have been recognized and mitigation strategies developed to provide for the the visual integration of the new built form.

The impact in the short term in this broad context is therefore considered acceptable and, in the long term strongly positive with the provision of a balanced and rehabilitated development adjoining environmentally sensitive land. The overall living amenity achieved will be of the highest standard.